

Seabird Colony Protection Program Outreach and Education Working Group Meeting

January 30, 2007, 11:00am – 3:00pm

Attendees:

Aeutia Scott- Natural Resource Management Specialist, Presidio Natural Resources, National Park Service
Christian Hellwig- Biologist, Alcatraz Island
Melissa Pitkin- Education and Outreach Program Director, PRBO
Ken Frazier- Beach Watch Volunteer and Pilot
Bob Breen- Education Seat, Gulf of the Farallones Sanctuary Advisory Council
Lisa Uttal- Education Specialist, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (via phone)

Hosts:

Carol Preston- Education Coordinator, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (GFNMS)
Karen Reyna- Resource Protection Specialist, SCPP Program Manager, GFNMS
Kelley Higgason- SCPP Program Coordinator, GFNMS
Sage Tezak- SCPP Outreach Specialist, GFNMS

Program Update- Karen Reyna

- As per recommendations from our last meeting, we have split the jobs. We will hire individuals as contractors to do design work for separate projects as well as a Communications Specialist to help with messaging, advertising, articles, etc. This has not yet been advertised due to the budget and the timeline involved with the government. We should have this position filled by the fall.
- Since our October meeting, we have hired Jamie Hall to do the artwork for our outreach posters.
- We have also hired someone to provide pelican roosting sites for our map, which currently has breeding sites.
- We have ordered pilot guides and are looking for ways to publish in them.
- Sage has been putting together both pilot and boating databases, working with Vivian Matuk on the boating contacts.

Seabird Outreach Venues and Messages Overview- Sage Tezak and Carol Preston

Outreach Venues

- Sage looked at all the airshows in California and spoke with Ken about how far pilots normally travel. She found they often travel 200 miles in any direction, and felt this was too far of an outreach range for our first year, we will instead focus on everything this side of I-5.
- Sage felt doing seminars for the pilots would be more productive than displaying at airshows,
- Wings Over Wine Country is one airshow that could be a good one to display at though.
- California International Airshow to Watsonville Airshow- we would focus on seminars instead
- Western Regional Safety Seminar- this is a lofty goal but attainable.
- Fred Hall Show- we will distribute tide books.
- Pacific Power Boat Festival and the International Sportsman Expo we will evaluate in the future.
- Northern California Boat Festival wasn't really the venue for us, we could look into partnering with California Boating and Waterways though to have information available there.
- We will go to the Bodega Bay Fisherman's Festival and the Pigeon Point Lighthouse Lighting and partner with GFNMS; we will check out the Flyway Festival to display at next year, and we will attend Paddle Fest which is one of the only festivals where you can test gear so it is very popular.
- Vivian has invited the program to be in the Changing Tides newsletter, we will have our first article this Spring.
- Fly the Bay Tour- we would like to have the program on this in some way, possibly on the back.

Discussion

- Ken stated that the FAA sends out an electronic newsletter that contains information on meetings at different airports, one was for the Fly the Bay Tour, at the San Carlos airport, and it was full immediately, we could give out this map if it had our information.
- Sage had to order the map for \$15 per copy.
- Melissa suggested finding a pilot to do a “bird friendly” or “wildlife friendly” tour.
- Melissa also stated that the Aware Foundation could possibly provide funding for a map like this. They like to fund advocacy type projects, but also projects that invoke behavioral changes They could possibly pay for the printing of tide books.
- One suggestion for the tide books would be to have a picture of seabirds on them.
- Bob Breen stated that the planning meetings for Dream Machines would be a good place to hand out materials.

Action>> Bob will get more information on these dates for the program.

- Melissa asked if we could fly a banner at an airshow? i.e. “Fly safe for seabirds!”
- Karen stated that a non-profit she use to work for did flyovers on beaches with “protect the oceans” messaging that included a number to call to possibly volunteer or donate.
- Ken stated that the only issue with banner towing is altitude (i.e. how low do you have to fly it). We would need to figure out what altitude they are towing at, he feels it is probably below 2000 ft AGL.

Action>> Ken will try to find out what altitude they must tow at.

- Melissa stated that if it is just over an airshow (not over any colonies), maybe it would be ok.
- Ken agreed that it is powerful to get information directly to pilots. Dream Machines might be a good example, we could try to post information on their website and give them information as well. There is a non-standard traffic pattern there. We should use the words “seabird sensitive.”
- Melissa asked if are there announcers at shows? They could announce information every hour about the program/display and the handouts we have.
- Chris stated that for the giveaway items, we should step back and figure out what we can give them that would help them to appreciate seabirds, i.e. artwork with our message.
- Aluetia stated we should address safety issues.
- Ken passed around a picture of a plane with a broken wing with a message at the bottom that originally came from a T-shirt: “The average pilot, despite the somewhat swaggering exterior, is very much capable of such feelings as love, affection, intimacy and caring. These feelings just don’t involve anyone else.” The picture is a result of a bird strike (turkey vulture). We could emphasize that since breeding colonies have high mortality rates, turkey vultures visit them often. Pilots will see this is extremely dangerous and it will be very expensive, and for renters it will be even worse.
- Chris asked if pilots do anything to avoid bird strikes.
- Ken replied that they fly above 2000ft, but not necessarily because of birds.
- Chris wondered if a message like “Share the Air” would work.

Event Discussion

- Bob stated that a professional jet skiers association has been formed. This may be a good group to contact. They are associated with Jeff Clark and Doug Epstein of Maverick’s.
- Chris asked what are the statistics on event attendees (comparison between boat/plane owners or renters and general public)?
- Ken asked if the Aware group have any information on events?
- Melissa stated she has found festivals are often not useful. The Flyway Festival is interesting and a good way to network with other organizations, but in general tabling is not fun, and it is hard to get volunteers. People go to buy things, the information tables pass out a lot of handouts but attendees often leave with a stack that they then dump. PRBO usually doesn’t get very many new members, donations, etc. Melissa feels that seminars and announcements would be better.
- Ken stated that many birders do not know seabirds.

- Chris stated that as a boater or pilot he may not want to look at brochures, but he would take the time for a video presentation, etc.
- Carol suggested maybe something shorter than “Returning Home.”

Messaging

- Carol reported that the program has come up with some ideas, and would like to get the group’s input on messaging, the use of a major logo, different captions for boaters/pilots, etc.
- Ken stated that his step son is a recreational fisherman and he knows a surprising amount about things other than fish, i.e. that a seabird feeding frenzy= lots of fish; a good line could be “mother natures fish finder”
- Melissa stated that the fisherman do have a respect for that but there is also the danger of catching the seabirds and getting into trouble
- Bob stated that shore fishermen mostly get upset at marine mammals
- Melissa stated that one component to focus on could be “stress kills” to help people understand when a bird is not directly hit, hurt, or killed it can still be harmed. Explain why “flying’ birds are not always a good thing.
- Ken recommended a chart comparing plane altitudes to numbers of bird strikes.

Brainstorming Session- Kelley Higgason and Sage Tezak

Pilot display

- Another possibility for the monitor would be photos that loop with captions describing the birds, also we should take our venue into account, whether we are inside or outside it can be hard to see the screen
- The 3D rocks with decoys (include babies) and eggs is a good idea.
- Seabird Sense section is good to establish an emotional connection, make sure to talk about babies; It’s the Law section is good as well.
- We should work on properly displaying maps, maybe stick to one map per display- some suggestions= only overflight map for pilots and add airports to it, just colony map for boaters; we could also have one clear overlay of the restricted areas and one overlay of the colonies that people could then place over the sanctuaries map.
- For the section with facts on dangers of low overflights to pilots and boaters we should focus on damage.

Action>> For the display panel, Ken will look into the feasibility of constructing a lightweight windshield.

- We should try to work with “How to Fly a Bay Tour” to get sensitive colonies on that map, we could use that map for the display.
- The tagline is more important than the name of the program, it is what will draw people in.

Boating display

- Using a light would be good for fishermen but not for other boaters, maybe have a split message.
- A big problem with boats is that they go through birds and there is no consequence, maybe we should add images of “right” and “wrong” boating practices, with one picture going through birds and flushing them and the other going around; get the message across that it is in their best interest to steer around.
- We should have different maps depending on what area we are in, the local port should be emphasized.

Possible display giveaway items

- Hats with no button on top would be a good option, no plastic and organic materials, could be a raffle prize, limited number available
- Croakies
- Aluminum water bottle or coffee cup

- Floating keychain (boaters)
- Flashlight with red filter (pilots)

Review of draft poster concepts and images- *Jamie Hall & Carol Preston*

- Jamie showed the group a mock up of what the poster artwork will be and explained that he will add dots to the map for seabird colonies.
- Melissa stated that people should be able to tell what the colony names are.

Action>> The program would send the poster with a letter and attachments with more information on the colonies, but probably can not add them to the map.

- Ken suggested that the boating approach distance should also be 2000ft so it is the same as pilots.
- Bob stated that he uses football fields to describe distance.
- Melissa stated that approach distances are not the same for every colony.
- Carol asked if we have to give a specific recommendation? Can we do one generic poster, one poster for boaters, one for pilot (use colony map for boaters, overflight map for pilots)?
- Add “you are here stars”... And so are they
- Ken asked if the bird circles could be color coded to match the dots?
- Jamie stated that he may use bird silhouettes for colony dots.
- Melissa stated that she was having a bit of a problem with a pelican on a pier. The message is not to go too close, but we are not really worried about the pelicans on the dock, they are not disturbed on the docks, they are not roosting there.
- Ken suggested the gull should have a nest.
- Melissa suggested that the pelican should be in a roosting area. Pilings would be ok without a dock.
- Aluetia stated that she does like the approach distance noted.
- Karen stated that we could do “steer clear” instead of feet, we could also denote distance in football fields.
- Melissa stated that rafts of birds, and feeding flocks also get disturbed. Parking a boat in the middle prevents them from food/rest. We should focus on colonies, feeding flocks, and rafts. It would also be good to put common names under the seabirds pictures.
- Ken suggested drawing an airplane above a flock.
- Karen asked if we should we have a rafting image?
- Melissa stated that maybe cormorants rafting would be good.
- Kelley stated we could explain what the birds were doing in each picture.

Review of updated pilot brochure- *Kelley Higgason*

- Ken stated it was good to keep the map on front.
- Melissa offered the program use of better images.

Action>> SCPP to contact Melissa for images

- Ken suggested contacting Susan Danielson about getting an environmentally friendly plastic insert for the pilot guides.
- Ken also suggested using heavier card stock (we can get 100% recycled or tree free) and to also target pilot guide websites.

Action>> Kelley will send Ken some links on bird strikes

Meeting wrap-up and next steps- *Karen Reyna*

- The next meeting will be held in late June.
- Chris offered to host the meeting on Alcatraz.